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Scenic Route Element

Revised 12-14-92

PLANNED SCENIC ROUTES

CERTIFICATION

SCENIC ROUTE ELEMENT

LIVERMORE GENERAL PLAN
1976-2000

CITY OF LIVERMORE, CALIFORNIA

This is to certify that the Scenic Route Element was adopted as the Fourth Amendment to the Livermore General Plan, 1976-2000, City of Livermore, County of Alameda, California.

Adopted by City Council (Resolution 225-77)
on October 11, 1977.



Helen M. Tirsell
Mayor



Dorothy J. Hock
City Clerk

Prepared by
City Planning Department
Livermore, California

PLANNED SCENIC ROUTES

MT. DIABLO

BRUSHY
PEAK

PASS RD.

ALTAMONT

DALTON

HARTFORD

HARTMAN

NO LIVERMORE
AVE.

COLLIER
CANYON

RD.

DOLAN

TASSAJARA
RD.

I - 580

GOLF
COURSE

LAS POSITAS

QUARRY

VINEYARD

VINEYARDS

SAN ANTONIO
RESERVOIR

CONCANNON

ARROYO
MOCHO

BLVD.

TESLA RD.

RD.
VASCO

RD.
GREENVILLE

PATTERSON
PASS RD.

RD.
FLYNN

LIVERMORE
VALLEY

ARROYO
VALLE

LIVERMORE
VALLEY

ARROYO
MOCHO

LAKE
DEL VALLE

VALLECITOS

ISABEL
AVE.

ARROYO
RD.



LEGEND

EXISTING

PROPOSED / CORRIDORS

FREEWAY

NON-SCENIC SEGMENT

MAJOR STREETS

SCENIC VISTAS

WATER WAYS

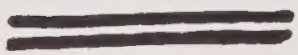
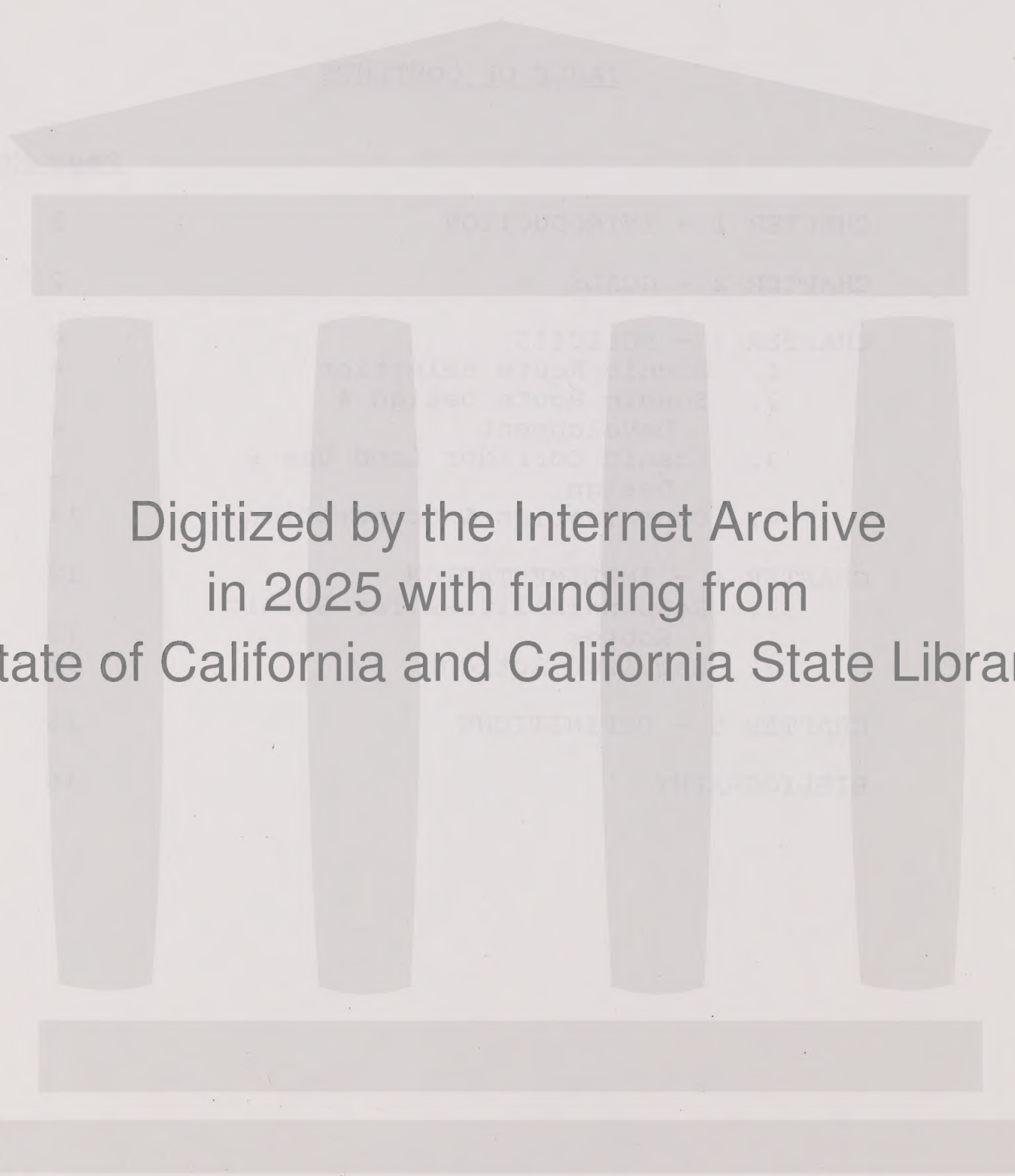


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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The Scenic Route Element of the Community General Plan has been prepared and adopted as required and authorized by Section 65302(g) of the Government Code of the State of California. More importantly the Scenic Route Element has been adopted to guide development in a manner that will protect and enhance scenic values which may be found along the streets and highways in the Valley and which are deemed to be of outstanding quality or which provide access to important scenic, recreational, cultural, or historic points.

Further, the Scenic Route Element is intended to provide a more comprehensive plan and to expand upon the Scenic Route plans of Alameda County and the State Division of Highway within the Livermore Planning Area. The Plan incorporates the County of Alameda Scenic Route Element and adds local routes having scenic qualities.

CHAPTER 2

GOALS

The Scenic Route Element, consisting of text and map, is designed to serve as a guide for the establishment of programs and legislation dealing with the development of a system of scenic routes and the preservation and enhancement of scenic qualities and of natural scenic areas adjacent to and visible from scenic routes.

The Scenic Route Element shall identify specific geographic subareas within the Scenic Corridor. These subareas will be subject to the specific policies of this element as they pertain to the specific geographic region. Specific, but varying, standards are designed to protect and enhance the special characteristics of each subarea. Subarea standards will vary to respond to specific physical topography, unique features of rock outcroppings, vistas, trees, streams, or location relative to the Scenic Corridor, or unique biologic features, historic structures and features, etc. per the General Plan. At this time only one specific subarea (Subarea A) has been identified and only a portion of that subarea has been provided specific standards.*

This portion of Subarea A has been identified and provided with special standards because of its unique characteristic of height relative to the elevation of the I-580 freeway in the Scenic Corridor. A significant portion of the ridge within this subarea is at an elevation lower than the I-580 freeway and therefore does not necessitate the same protections afforded ridges or portions of ridges that are at or above the freeway elevation in this location and that are currently protected by the General Plan and Scenic Route Element Policies.*

It is the intent that the policies, programs and standards developed specifically for a portion of Subarea A of the Scenic Corridor be the controlling policies in meeting the goals and intent of the protection of this portion of Subarea A only. At this time, all areas except for the portion of Subarea A specifically addressed in this element are governed by the Visual Resource Policies of the General Plan and the Scenic Route Element. Until other subarea regulations are developed, policies developed specifically for portions of Subarea A (that area between N. Livermore Avenue and the Portola Avenue on/off ramp only) shall govern the development of that portion of Subarea A but shall not supercede the other relevant policies of the General Plan and Scenic Route Element. In the event of a direct conflict between policies within the Scenic Route Element, the specific landform policies for Subarea A shall govern for Subarea A only.*

Stated more fully, the Plan is intended to establish official basic policy regarding:

1. Objectives, principles, and general standards for development of a scenic route system, and preservation and enhancement of adjacent scenic areas visible from the scenic route.
2. Definition and designation of a scenic route system and adjacent areas.
3. Coordination of scenic route proposals and programs among Federal, State, Regional, County, and City levels of government.
4. Employment of all available, appropriate scenic conservation legislation.
5. Development of legislative measures and official programs to protect and enhance scenic values along scenic routes.
6. Establish objectives, principles, and general standards for development within a portion of Subarea A (that area only between south of N. Livermore Avenue and the Portola Avenue on/off ramp, See Exhibit A).*

CHAPTER 3

POLICIES

The following policies are applicable to the Scenic Route Element:

1. Scenic Route Selection

A. Provide a continuous, convenient system of Scenic Routes

The Scenic Route System should be complete enough to be convenient to all persons in Livermore and to provide continuous pleasurable travel within major scenic areas and between major scenic areas and recreational and cultural centers in the Planning Area and adjacent areas. The routes should afford aesthetically pleasing views to both the traveler and the outside observer throughout the entire system.

B. Establish efficient and attractive connecting links

The Scenic Route System should include attractive and efficient links between routes of major scenic value and recreational and cultural centers. These links should include certain freeways and other roadways coordinated among appropriate jurisdictions.

C. Provide variety of Scenic Routes

A variety of experiences such as changes in terrain, vegetation, landforms, and view should be provided in the selection of routes within the System. The geographical location and distribution of routes should be selected to provide the traveler with a choice from among the outstanding scenic values within the Valley.

2. Scenic Route design and development

A. Access control

Relatively uninterrupted movement of pleasure driving vehicles on scenic routes should be accommodated by control of access, avoidance of stop signs, and synchronization of traffic signals on scenic expressways and thoroughfares whenever possible. Through movement of trucking should be prohibited on scenic routes unless no alternate paralleling through routes are available within a reasonable distance.

B. Use of landscaping to increase scenic qualities of scenic corridors

Landscaping should be designed and maintained in scenic route corridors to provide added visual interest, to frame scenic views, and to screen unsightly views.

C. Location of transmission towers and lines outside of scenic route corridors

New overhead transmission towers and lines should not be located within scenic corridors.

D. Undergrounding of utility distribution lines when feasible

Overhead lines to be made inconspicuous

New, relocated, or existing utility distribution lines should be placed underground. If underground placement is not feasible, they should be located so as to be inconspicuous from the scenic route on poles of an improved design. When more than one utility line is in an area they should be combined on adjacent rights-of-way and common poles.

3. Scenic Corridor land use and design

A. Establishment of architectural and site design review

Architectural and site design review by the appropriate local jurisdiction should be provided for each site and for all new or altered structures so that particular consideration will be given to appearances which will enhance scenic qualities from the scenic routes. Originality in landscape and construction design should be encouraged. Such designs should be in keeping with the cityscape and natural skyline and reflect the density, movement, and activities of the population.

- (1) In all zoning districts where the allowable height limit exceeds thirty-five (35) feet each proposed structure over thirty-five (35) feet, except utility poles and lines, should be reviewed to ensure that such structure will not conflict with any view from any scenic route.
- (2) Alteration of natural or artificial land contours should not be permitted without a grading permit issued by the local jurisdiction as a means of preserving and enhancing the natural topography and vegetation in developable areas. Mass grading should not be permitted. A Grading Permit shall be granted in accordance with the guidelines stated in

Policy #7(c) of the Visual Resources Policies in Part III of the General Plan. Such a permit shall be permitted as approved on the Site Development Plan. (Resolution No. 167-83).

- (3) For a portion of Subarea A only, as identified in Exhibit A, the following shall apply:
The landform between N. Livermore Avenue and the Portola Avenue on/off ramp contains a ridgeline and visual features to protect. The ridgeline has two zones of primary protection and two zones of secondary protection. (See Exhibit A)
- One Primary Protection Zone shall be 550 feet in width measured approximately 130 feet to the east and 420 feet to the west from the ridge peak (an elevation of 492.6 feet). Because of previous grading that took place, up to 2 feet of soil shall be replaced within this zone and on this ridge for purposes of restoration of the natural landform. Such restoration shall be subject to obtaining an approved grading permit as part of a City approved development plan.
The other Primary Protection Zone shall be located from N. Livermore Avenue west approximately 430' measured along the ridge line. No restoration is permitted within this Primary Protection Zone.
-One Secondary Protection Zone shall be between the two Primary Protection Zones. Only 150' within this zone (as established by Exhibit A) shall be permitted to be augmented. A berm up to a maximum of 9 feet may be located within the 150 foot area per Exhibit A.
The second Secondary Protection Zone shall begin at the western boundary of the Primary Protection Zone which includes the Area of Restoration. It shall continue west for approximately 200 feet. A berm up to a maximum of 7 feet at about 40 feet east of the Davidon property line may slope continuously downward at 0 feet grade at the west end of the Secondary Protection Zone. Landform augmentation of any kind is permitted only after the project has met the conditions as established in Section 5 & 7 of this Chapter.*
4. Any augmentation and restoration in Subarea A shall be subject to a grading permit and shall be designed and graded to make the landform on all sides consistent in natural form such that it cannot be identified as an augmented landform.*

B. Scenic corridor design standards

The following criteria shall be applied in the review of building and grading permits in developable areas:

- (1) As a means of preserving natural "ridge skylines", no major ridgeline should be altered to the extent that an artificial ridgeline results. Minor grading to allow construction of individual dwellings should be permitted below the skylines, ridgelines, or silhouettes as approved on the site development review plan.
- (2) Access roads should be located and designed to keep grading to a minimum. Natural ground contours in slope areas over ten percent (10%) should not be altered more than five percent (5%) overall, except in such slope areas where large stands of mature vegetation, scenic natural formations, or natural watercourses exist where grading should be limited so as to preserve the natural features.
- (3) The I-580 Scenic Corridor is defined as the area which is within 3,500 feet on each side of the centerline of I-580, and visible from the I-580 roadway.
- (4) Development in the Scenic Corridor must preserve, to the largest degree feasible, the view of the ridgelines as seen from the Scenic Corridor roadway. To that end, no development, structures or man-made objects except for berms or planting erected for landscaping purposes may obscure any portion of the ridgeline as seen from the Scenic Corridor roadway unless the Council finds the following:
 - (a) Alteration of the structure so that it does not obscure the ridgeline would not allow for a reasonable use of the land in a way consistent with the General Plan.
 - (b) Structures which obscure the ridgeline do so in a sufficiently limited way and are spaced sufficiently far apart so as to in no way create the effect of a wall between the viewer and the ridgeline.
 - (c) Structures which obscure the ridgeline do so in a sufficiently limited way so as not to detract from the scenic value of the corridor.

- (5) All structures south of the ridge, in the portion of Subarea A identified in Exhibit A, shall be subject to the following:
- (a) The residential units for the Davidon project site that are closest to the northern boundary shall be single-story or not exceed 20 feet in height except for Lot 78 (Per Tract Map #6522) which can be two-story but not exceed 27 feet in height.
 - (b) All remaining residential townhouse structures on the Davidon site shall not exceed 27 feet in height.
 - (c) Whether or not visible from the Scenic Corridor, all roof and building materials for residential and commercial developments shall be earth tones, non-reflective and blend with the land form and natural setting.
 - (d) All commercial and residential structures on the Connolly project site shall not penetrate the surface established by drawing a line from a point four (4) feet above the I-580 freeway surface and the highest point of the building (27 feet) on the proposed commercial market per the City approved Site Plan or an elevation of 496 feet.*
- (6) In the Scenic Corridor, the following limits apply to changes in the natural ground contours:
- (a) Zone 1: Within two thousand (2,000) feet of the Scenic Corridor, alterations are allowed in slope areas to ten percent (10%) and an area equal to five percent (5%) of the overall Zone 1 area within the property to be developed can be altered above the ten percent (10%) slope, defined as the lowest lying ten percent (10%) slope at the base of the hill area. This additional area shall be distributed evenly along the ten percent (10%) slope but shall not intrude into the adjacent fifteen percent (15%) slope.
 - (b) Zone II: Between two thousand (2,000) feet and two thousand five hundred (2,500) feet of the Scenic Corridor, alterations are allowed in slope areas to fifteen percent (15%) and that an area equal to seven and one-half percent (7.5%) of the overall Zone II area within the property to be developed can be altered above the fifteen percent (15%) slope, defined as the lowest lying fifteen percent (15%) slope at the base of the hill area. This additional area shall be distributed evenly along the fifteen percent (15%) slope

but shall not intrude into the adjacent twenty percent (20%) slope.

- (c) Zone III: Between two thousand five hundred (2,500) and three thousand five hundred (3,500) feet of the Scenic Corridor, alterations are allowed in the slope areas to twenty percent (20%) defined as the lowest lying twenty percent (20%) slope at the base of the hill area, and that an area equal to seven and one-half percent (7.5%) of the overall Zone III area within the property to be developed can be altered above the twenty percent (20%) slope. This additional area shall be distributed evenly along the adjacent twenty percent (20%) slope but shall not intrude into a twenty-five percent (25%) slope.

- (7) Grading shall be limited so as to preserve natural features where large stands of vegetation, scenic natural formations, or natural watercourses exist.

Any contour altered by grading should be restored by means of land sculpturing in such a manner as to minimize run-off and erosion problems and should be planted with low maintenance, plant materials that are compatible with the existing environment and the intent of the Scenic Route Element.

This shall not preclude restoration within a Primary Protection Zone or augmentation within a Secondary Protection Zone as defined in Chapter 5 for the portion of Subarea A that lies between N. Livermore Avenue and the Portola Avenue on/off ramp, south of I-580.*

C. Provision for normal uses of land and protection against unsightly features

In both urban and rural areas, normally permitted uses of land should be allowed in scenic corridors, except that panoramic views and vistas should be preserved and enhanced through the:

- (1) Supplementing of zoning regulations with special height, area, and side yard regulations.
- (2) Providing architectural and site design review.
- (3) Prohibiting and removing billboards, signs not relevant to the main use of the property, obtrusive signs, automobile wrecking and junk yards, and similar unsightly development or use of land.

Design and location of all signs should be regulated to prevent conglomerations of unsightly signs along roadsides.

D. Retention of public easements for recreation trails

All public easements should remain free and clear of any structures or improvements other than planting, except where they are required by public necessity or as a means of providing unobstructed areas for future recreation trails.

E. Controlled removal of vegetation

Except for agricultural crops, no vegetation should be removed without permission of the local jurisdiction as a means of preserving the scenic quality.

For the Connolly project site only, a 25 foot wide landscape easement shall be created contiguous with and south of the Rose Lawn Cemetery. This landscape easement shall extend from N. Livermore Avenue along the full length of the Rose Lawn Cemetery or approximately 670 feet in length.*

The purpose of the landscape easement is to provide for protection and continued maintenance of the landscaping within the easement on the property south of the Rose Lawn Cemetery and for the planting of native California species within this same easement for the express purpose of providing for a permanent and perpetual foliage screen as viewed from the I-580 Scenic Corridor.*

For the Davidon project site only, the area of restoration and augmentation shall be revegetated consistent with the landscape plans approved under the Housing Implementation Program (HIP).*

F. Controlled alteration of streambeds and bodies of water

Alteration of streambeds or bodies of water and adjacent vegetation should be permitted only with approval of the local jurisdiction, as a means of preserving the natural scenic quality of stream courses, bodies of water, vegetation, and wildlife in the Valley. Development adjacent to streams, canals, reservoirs, and other bodies of water should be in a manner that will preserve the natural scenic qualities of the area, or when scenic qualities are minimal shall be designed and treated so as to result in naturalistic, architectural, or sculptural forms.

G. Preservation and enhancement of natural scenic qualities in areas beyond the scenic corridor

Views from scenic routes will comprise essentially all of the remainder of the Valley beyond the limits of the scenic corridor. The Corridor is intended to establish a framework for the observation of the views beyond; therefore, in all areas in the Valley extending beyond the scenic route corridors, scenic qualities should be preserved through retaining the general character of natural slopes and natural formations and, through preservation and where desirable, enhancement of water areas, water courses, vegetation and wildlife habitats. Development of lands adjacent to scenic route corridors should not obstruct views of scenic areas, and development should be visually compatible with the natural scenic qualities.

H. Coordination of scenic routes and recreation areas

There should be maximum coordination in planning for scenic routes and adjacent public recreation areas such as parks, scenic outlooks, roadside rests, cycling, hiking and riding trails. Recreation routes and trails should continue into adjacent communities to provide continuous networks for the enjoyment of the public. Scenic route recreation trails should be coordinated with existing and planned local, regional, and state trails.

4. Coordination and cooperation, other public agencies

A. The Scenic Route Element will supplement the Land Use and Circulation Elements of City and County General Plans and is in conformance with General Plan policies and objectives.

B. Guide and control preservation and development of scenic routes through legislative standards

As a means of implementing City and County General Plans and protecting and enhancing scenic values, City and County legislation which includes standards should be established to coordinate, guide, and control preservation and development of scenic routes, scenic corridors and areas beyond the scenic corridor. (See section of implementation for further detail.)

CHAPTER 4

IMPLEMENTATION

1. Responsibilities for Scenic Routes

Route selection, determination of right-of-way width, and general design standards for scenic routes are the responsibility of the City or the County and, in the case of State highway, the State of California, and in certain instances are the joint responsibility of the State, Alameda County, and the City. Final design standards and construction and maintenance of the paved road and appurtenances are the responsibility of the County Surveyor or City or State engineers. All right-of-way land would be owned in fee by the State or owned by or dedicated to the local jurisdiction.

2. Required actions

- A. Adoption by the County and the City of Scenic Route Elements to General Plans.
- B. Periodic review of the Scenic Route Elements by the County and the City.
- C. Continued cooperation of cities, adjacent counties, local and regional recreational and planning agencies, and all appropriate State agencies in various programs leading to the implementation of the Scenic Route Element.
- D. Adoption and application of legislation for control and development in accordance with Scenic Route Element principles and standards including:
 - (1) Zoning Ordinance supplements, which will be based on scenic route planning principles and standards and will include regulations on:
 - (a) Land uses.
 - (b) Building heights.
 - (c) Building setbacks.

- (d) Residential density.
 - (e) Building coverage.
 - (f) Lot area.
 - (g) Planned unit development and cluster development.
 - (h) Architectural and site design review.
 - (i) Historical preservation.
 - (j) On-premise signs.
 - (k) Outdoor advertising and time limits for removal of non-conforming signs.
 - (l) Floodplain.
 - (m) Screening and landscaping.
 - (n) Quarries and other excavations.
- (2) Subdivision regulations, which will be based on scenic route planning principles and standards and will include:
- (a) Limiting of cut and fill.
 - (b) Tree preservation and planting.
 - (c) Bank seeding and planting.
 - (d) Limited access onto scenic highway.
 - (e) Low density use of land.
 - (f) Setback from water's edge.
 - (g) Easement dedication.
 - (h) Screening.
 - (i) Road design standards.
 - (j) Underground Utilities.
- (3) Building Code enforcement, which will significantly although indirectly contribute to the improvement of aesthetic qualities.

- (4) Maintenance controls, including:
- (a) Housing Code - Strict enforcement of a housing code and abatement of violations, as in an urban renewal project.
 - (b) Fire Prevention - Enforcement of a fire prevention code can indirectly contribute to the scenic route program. Fire prevention programs should avoid controlled and uncontrolled burns which may destroy native flora of scenic value. Appropriate planting and maintenance would avoid such a measure.
 - (c) Litter Control - An anti-litter ordinance should be effectively enforced. Public areas under the jurisdiction of the local government should be carefully maintained.
 - (d) Weed and Insect Control - Attention should be given to discretionary use of weed and insect control measures to eliminate unsightly conditions in the scenic corridor and other pertinent areas beyond the corridor and to avoid the destruction of scenic native flora.
 - (e) Water Pollution - Water quality control should be enforced on the basis of odor and appearance as well as health hazard, particularly in streams and lakes within and beyond the scenic corridor.
- (5) Stream bed, canal, lake, and reservoir protection legislation to establish a system for review and approval of alterations to inland water bodies or watercourses.
- (6) Application of existing legislative programs and development policy for additional legislative tools to acquire land, open space easements, or development rights in scenic corridors.
- (7) Application to State and Federal Government bodies for grants for acquisition of property, or open space easements or development rights in the scenic corridor, and for landscaping along all routes.
- (8) Preparation of detailed development plans or scenic routes showing paved road, right-of-way, scenic corridor, public areas and facilities.
- (9) Preparation and initiation of scenic corridor and scenic area pilot projects.

- (10) Establishment of official programs to encourage landscaping of all building sites and to provide street trees along all rights-of-way.
- (11) Application to the State for inclusion of State routes in the State Master Plan for "Scenic Highways" and for designation of "Official State Scenic Highways".

CHAPTER 5

DEFINITIONS

Terms used in the Scenic Route Element and various classifications are defined as follows:

1. Augment: To make greater or enlarge by grading.*
2. Restoration: To return a landform to its previous natural state or condition as identified by the City.*
3. Protection Zone: A landform that has been identified for protection under the policies and standards of the Scenic Corridor Element. This definition applies only to portions of the landform in Subarea A identified in Exhibit A.
 - A. Protection Zone, Primary: An area subject to the full provisions of the existing General Plan and Scenic Route Element policies.*
 - B. Protection Zone, Secondary: An area subject to the provisions of the existing General Plan and amended Scenic Route Element Policies.
4. Scenic Route: A highway, street, or other roadway having one or more of the following characteristics:
 - A. A route which has inherent beauty by virtue of its own design or the character of that land through which it traverses.
 - B. A route which provides the major access to or between major scenic, recreational, or cultural attractions.
 - C. A route which provides a vista or view of the Valley as a whole or of areas within the valley having noted beauty worthy of preservation.
5. Scenic Route Corridor: A scenic route and that area adjacent which served as justification for scenic route designation.

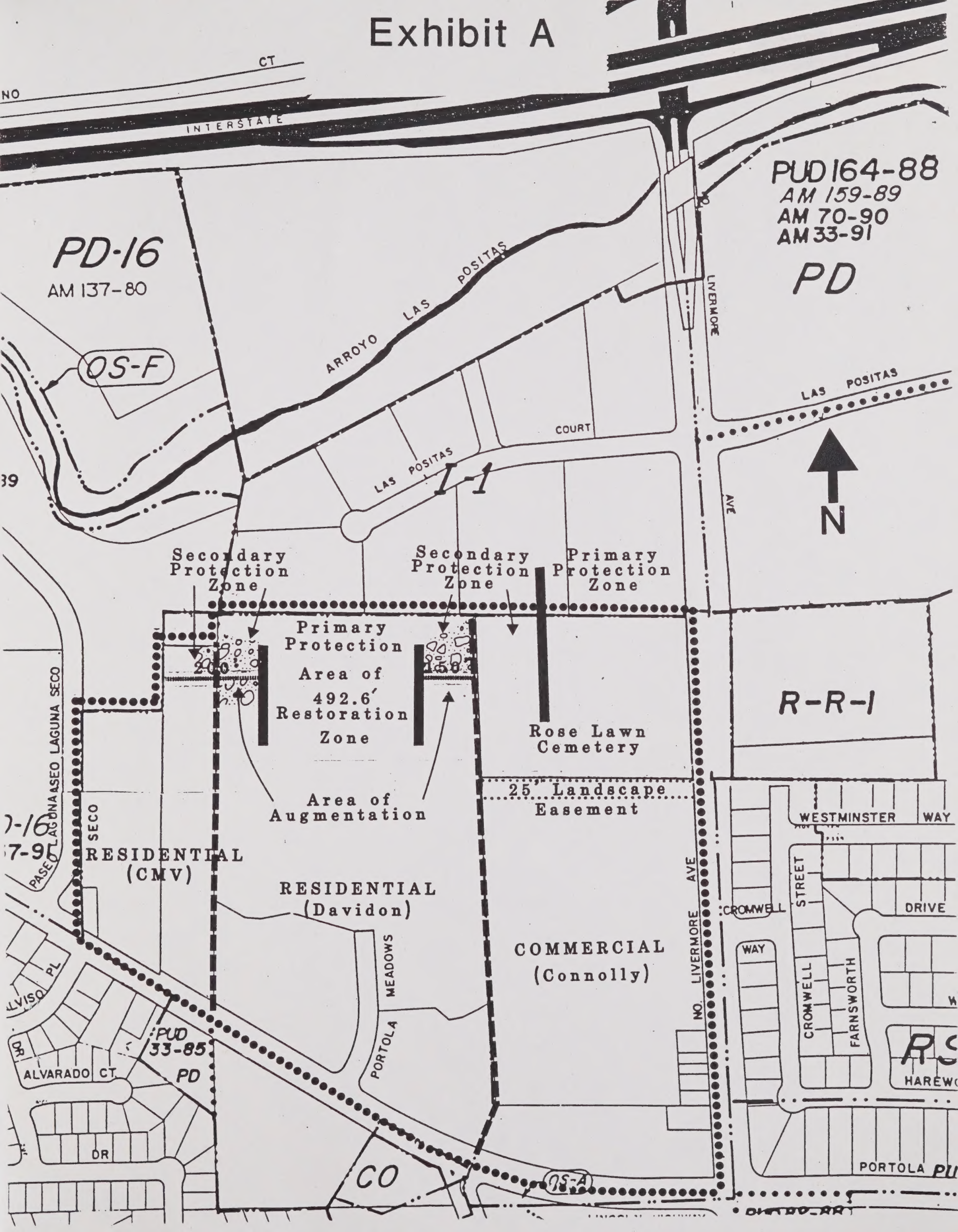
6. Scenic Feature: An element of the landscape having beauty, historical significance, or other characteristics making it worthy of preservation as a visual feature.
7. Non-scenic Segment: Those portions of a scenic route which have no qualities justifying a scenic route designation but which are designated for purposes of showing continuity.
8. Valley: The Livermore-Amador Valley.
9. Planning Area: That portion of the Livermore Valley defined as the City's Sphere of Influence in the Livermore Community General Plan.

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1. Scenic Route Element of the General Plan, Alameda County, May 1966.
2. The Scenic Route, a guide for the official designation of eligible scenic highways, State of California, Department of Public Works.
3. A Plan For Scenic Highways in California, March 15, 1963.

cn/scenic

Exhibit A



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